

**Consultancy to Assist the SPREP Secretariat**

**in Exploring Options for**

**Establishing a Sub-regional Presence**

**in the Pacific Region**

**Preliminary Report**

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### **3. List of Acronyms**

<b>BLI</b>	Bird Life International
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CROP</b>	Committee of Regional Organisations in the Pacific
<b>CTI</b>	Coral Triangle Initiative
<b>FLNKS</b>	Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et Socialiste
<b>FSM</b>	Federated States of Micronesia
<b>GCRMN</b>	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>HCA</b>	Host Country Agreement
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>ICR</b>	Independent Corporate Review
<b>ICRI</b>	International Coral Reef Initiative
<b>ISME</b>	International Society of Mangrove Ecosystems
<b>JICA</b>	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
<b>MAREPAC</b>	Marine Resources Pacific Consortium
<b>MCES</b>	Micronesian Chief Executives Summit
<b>MEA</b>	Multilateral Environment Agreement
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MPA</b>	Marine Protected Areas
<b>MPS</b>	Micronesian Presidents Summit
<b>MSG</b>	Micronesian Spearhead Group
<b>PAN</b>	Protected Area Networks
<b>PACC</b>	Pacific Adaptation for Climate Change
<b>PICCAP</b>	Pacific Islands Climate Change Adaptation Project
<b>PCS</b>	Palau Conservation Society
<b>PICRC</b>	Palau International Coral Reef Center
<b>PICTs</b>	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
<b>PIFS</b>	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
<b>PIGGAREP</b>	Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project
<b>PNG</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>POPs</b>	Persistent Organic Pollutants
<b>RIF</b>	(Pacific) Regional Infrastructure Framework
<b>RMI</b>	Republic of the Marshall Islands
<b>SD</b>	Sustainable Developments
<b>SPC</b>	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
<b>SPREP</b>	Secretariat of the Regional Environment Programme
<b>SRO</b>	Sub-regional Office
<b>TORs</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations Organisations
<b>UNDAF</b>	United National Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USP</b>	University of the South Pacific
<b>VMS</b>	Vanuatu Meteorological Service
<b>W&amp;CPFC</b>	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

#### 4. Executive Summary

The 21st SPREP Meeting held in Madang, Papua New Guinea in September 2010, endorsed the concept of establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region and called for the Secretariat to investigate options. The rationale for establishing a regional presence is to further strengthen and better align SPREP member activities with the 2011 – 2015 SPREP Strategic Plan and fulfil its regional mandate which is: *“To promote cooperation in the Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and ensure sustainable development for present and future generations”*

In July 2011 the terms of reference (TOR) for a consultant to undertake a study of the options concerning establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region were completed and a consultant appointed. The Secretariat developed and distributed a questionnaire to all Members and Key Partners/Donors to gather key input on their views on the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP, and how it will contribute to better delivery of services to PICTs, and enable SPREP to achieve the new strategic priorities under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

The next step in the process involved extensive consultation during field visits to 7 Member countries in 2 sub-regional areas of Melanesia and Micronesia. These countries included 3 Micronesian islands of Palau, Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia. The 4 Melanesian countries visited included Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. No visits were made to Polynesian Member countries due to time and logistical constraints. However issues they raised in their questionnaire response was taken into consideration in the study. During the visits to the selected countries in Micronesia and Melanesia, consultations were held with relevant/key government officials of SPREP Members, donors and other partner stakeholders. Additionally, follow up consultations were held with relevant CROP Agencies regarding the possibilities for co-location of SPREP staff and their experiences with decentralisation. Other consultations included discussions with SPREP Secretariat staff, as well as with relevant donors to ascertain options and interest in providing support for the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP.

The consultations findings and recommendations appear below. In summary, the notion of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in both Micronesia and Melanesia were overwhelmingly supported by a wide spectrum of agencies consulted during the study. Although it has not been possible to put a numerical figure on the cost/benefits of bringing SPREP services closer to the Members, there is substantial anecdotal evidence to support this initiative, based to a large extent on the decentralisation experiences of SPC and the UN Joint Presence Initiative. Both these regional agencies support SPREP decentralisation, as do the SPREP Pacific island Members consulted who anticipate that the establishment of a sub-regional presence in Micronesia and Melanesia will eventuate in mutual benefits and lead to more effective and efficient use of SPREP resources, as well as provide Members with greater opportunities to contribute to SPREP governance

## **5. Summary of Recommendations**

### **(A) Micronesia**

- 1) SPREP undertakes to establish a sub-regional presence in Micronesia as soon as possible, ensuring that a nucleus of relevant SPREP programmes are represented by either newly appointed or re-located staff.
- 2) SPREP explore with FSM and SPC the opportunity to co-locate an initial number of staff as mentioned above, to share office equipment and management costs, should the civil engineering assessment of the current SPC office building in Pohnpei prove to be structurally sound. Should the building prove to be unsound, FSM, undertake to obtain an alternative building for both SPC and SPREP that they all agree is suitable for a joint CROP agency presence.
- 3) FSM be encouraged to actively seek funding to construct the Micronesian Village to include accommodation for SPC, SPREP and other CROP agencies to operate a joint CROP agency presence.

### **(B) Melanesia**

- 1) SPREP undertakes to establish a sub-regional presence in Melanesia as soon as possible, ensuring that a nucleus of relevant SPREP programmes are represented by either newly appointed or re-located staff.
- 2) SPREP explore with Vanuatu the opportunity to co-locate an initial number of staff as mentioned above, to share office equipment and management costs with SPC to create a 'one stop joint CROP agency presence', once the renovations to the house allocated to SPC is completed. Should this arrangement fall through, and if the MSG Secretariat is willing, SPREP should negotiate with the MSG Secretariat to co-locate with them. If this arrangement is not acceptable, then a fall back position for SPREP would be to explore the option to co-locate with the VMS.

## **6. Background**

The 21st SPREP Meeting held in Madang, Papua New Guinea in September 2010, endorsed the concept of establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region and called for the Secretariat to investigate options. The rationale for establishing a regional presence is to further strengthen and better align SPREP member activities with the 2011 – 2015 SPREP Strategic Plan and fulfil its regional mandate which is: *“To promote cooperation in the Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and ensure sustainable development for present and future generations”* The 2009 Report on the Independent Corporate Review (ICR) of SPREP called on Members to consider implementing a strategy of decentralising Secretariat activities within the region in order to improve its effectiveness at the operational level. Rather than employing the current “fly-in, fly-out” approach, the ICR called for the placement of Secretariat staff in strategic sub-regional locations which would allow for sufficient time for both government staff in the relevant Pacific islands and territories (PICTs) that require extensive support, and Secretariat personnel to achieve planned outcomes. This is consistent with the current trend where some

CROP, UN and other regional organisations have already placed staff at strategic sub-regional locations in order to provide improve the delivery of service to their Members.

## **(7) Methodology**

In July 2011 the terms of reference (TOR) for a consultant to undertake a study of the options concerning establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region were completed and a consultant appointed. A copy of the TOR is attached to this report at Annex (1). The Secretariat developed and distributed a questionnaire to all Members to gather key input on their views on the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP, and how it will contribute to better delivery of services to PICTs, and enable SPREP to achieve the new strategic priorities under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report at Annex (iv). Additionally, the same questionnaire was distributed to Key Partners/Donors to also gather key input in the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP, and how it will contribute to better delivery of services to PICTs, and enable SPREP to achieve the new strategic priorities identified under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

The next step in the process involved extensive consultation during field visits to 7 Member countries in 2 sub-regional areas of Melanesia and Micronesia. These countries included 3 Micronesian islands of Palau, Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia. The 4 Melanesian countries visited included Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. No visits were made to Polynesian Member countries due to time and logistical constraints, however issues they raised in their questionnaire responses were undertaken by other means as mentioned below. Consultations were held with relevant/key government officials of SPREP Members, donors and other partner stakeholders through telephone, teleconference or video conference calls as part of following up the questionnaire responses. Additionally, follow up consultations were held with relevant CROP Agencies regarding the possibilities for co-location of SPREP staff and their experiences with decentralisation. Other consultations included discussions with SPREP Secretariat staff, as well as with relevant donors to ascertain options and interest in providing support for the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP.

## **(8) Options for SPREP to establish a Pacific sub-regional presence.**

As a result of discussions with the SPREP Secretariat, Members, donors and other CROP agencies and stakeholders there are four main options or models that SPREP could adopt should they decide to establish a sub-regional presence in the Pacific region. There are precedents for all these options due to other CROP and partner agencies already establishing various forms of sub-regional presence in the Pacific region. All these options have distinctive operational characteristics, as well as pros and cons. They include:

### **1) Co-location with a CROP or other agency.**

Examples of this arrangement may be found in Pohnpei and Palau where a number of UN agencies, such as UNDP and UNICEF share an office known as the UN Joint Presence Initiative. Another example may be found in Vanuatu where the SPC Regional Rights Resources Team (RRRT), the SPC human rights programme shared an office with the USP Faculty of Law.

The operational characteristics of this arrangement include all agencies managing their own programmes independently of each other, despite their common interests. Both agencies share certain office equipment, some operational costs and space proportionally on a mutually agreed basis, or else one agency pays the other to 'rent' space and facilities. This arrangement assists all agencies sharing support costs, such as a driver, receptionist and office cleaning services. As each agency has separate programmes they normally have negotiated a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or host country agreement (HCA) with the national government, as well as formalised arrangements between themselves to govern their co-location, including cost sharing and support services sharing arrangements. This arrangement has been described as a, 'marriage of convenience' between like minded agencies.

The advantages of co-locating with a CROP or other agency include a cost-effective way of establishing a presence in the country by sharing support and other services with a like-minded organisation, whilst maintaining an independent identity, presence and programme. It usually means that the joint office is staffed when duty travel in country or outside the country requires staff to be absent from the office. It also allows the agency to expand staff and programme activities incrementally and relatively smoothly. Another advantage is that the employees of the agencies sharing the office facilities are able to engage in professional cross sectoral interaction in a creative and fruitful collegial environment.

The disadvantages of co-locating with a CROP or other agency include the risk that one agency may dominate office space and facilities, unfairly cost split and the arrangement lead to divided loyalty amongst shared support staff. Should one of the agencies sharing the office decide to end the co-location arrangement, it could lead the remaining agency or agencies disadvantages. Additionally, shared offices may experience personality issues where one agency staff person is unable, for various reasons to happily share the office space harmoniously. And lastly, it has been mentioned that, "marriages of convenience" such as office space co-location have a history of ending in a bitter divorce.

## **2) Single agency with a number of staff supporting various regional projects**

An exemplary example of this arrangement may be found in Pohnpei where SPC in 2007 established the SPC North Pacific Sub-regional Office. This office is headed by a manager and the professional staff all travel frequently to, and provide technical and other assistance to projects based in the sub-region. The office is governed by a HCA negotiated with the Government of FSM.

The overwhelming strength of this arrangement is that the countries in the sub-region feel that their priorities are better addressed and that their national development strategies and activities are better supported by the closeness and frequent attention by the sub-regional office staff. The advantage of technical staff located in the sub-region result in more responsive and cost effective travel, as well as countries feeling that they are getting good value as a result of their membership. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are budget savings due to professional staff time and travel being rationalised and focused on the sub-region. The professional staff also feel that their improved knowledge of conditions and priorities of the countries in the sub-region mean they are better able to tailor their

technical assistance and inputs into national development plans of the countries in the sub-region.

The main disadvantages of a sub-regional office include the risk of communication problems that may arise due to the distance from HQ. In particular, the ICT and finance systems need to function well and be compatible with the HQ systems. A well functioning ‘Help Desk’ system needs to be established between the sub-regional office and HQ to address ICT and finance systems breakdowns, as well as sub-regional staff trained to use the systems. Additionally, HCAs need to be comprehensive, realistic and regularly monitored.

### **3) Single agency with a number of staff dedicated to supporting national projects**

An example of this office arrangement can be illustrated by the SPC Solomon Island National office where the office is headed by an Officer-in-Charge with specific sectoral expertise. The staff are focused on a major project or dedicated to a specific sector or sub-sector. Additionally, the staff are dedicated to capacity building counterpart staff as well as providing technical assistance in the country where they are located. The national office presence is governed by an MOU or a HCA.

The advantages of this office arrangement concern the targeted technical assistance and support that staff are able to provide to assist a number of national projects within the same sector or sub-sector. Additionally, staff have intimate knowledge of national priorities and implementation issues which can mean that project risks and unintended consequences can be dealt with rapidly. Counterpart mentoring can be efficiently provided over the life of the project. The national offices are also able to be rapidly expanded to accommodate new projects and additional staff.

The main disadvantage concerns the risk that staff and counterparts may be sidelined to work on projects other than their priority projects, sometimes to the disadvantage of their pre-planned work plans. Secondly, projects may fall behind schedule if the Officer-in-Charge is too preoccupied with office administration at the expense of the main projects not achieving their scheduled targets. This arrangement can be costly if the sole agency occupying the premises is responsible for all office costs, including rent and utilities. And lastly, poor HQ support to the national office concerning IT, procurement, HR and finance systems can result in a dysfunctional office.

### **4) Single agency with staff dedicated to supporting a national project**

An example of this option may be found in the SPC Majuro-based Renewable Energy Project office, where the Renewable Energy Adviser is co-located with government counterpart staff within in a government ministry. This arrangement usually suits a situation where a single staff person is dedicated to a specific project and works closely with national counterpart(s). The in-country presence is normally covered by an MOU or HCA. These out posted project staff may be linked to a larger sub-regional project, so when the project ends the agency withdraws their staff. The advantages and disadvantages of this arrangement are similar to those mentioned in 3) above.



## **9. Synthesis of SPREP member, partner and donor consultations**

### **(a) SPREP Member country feedback**

#### **1. Palau**

##### **(i) Role of SPREP in Palau**

SPREP has had a long, extensive and valued presence in Palau over the past decades. Their work in the past, as is their current work is viewed very positively by government and non-government agency representatives. The flagship projects mentioned by government officials were the support to environment education in 1987 and the 1999 Stockholm Agreement initiative. The Minister of State in particular was very appreciative of the past and continued support from SPREP that Palau receives, noting that SPREP current support includes valued sub-regional projects, such as the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project. NGOs also mentioned their appreciation for support provided by SPREP to Palau in environment education and in the conservation sector, such as the Bird Life International (BLI) project, as well as a previously supported project concerning the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.

##### **(ii) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

Palau agencies consulted expressed very positive views about SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Micronesia. Both government and non-government agencies cited the higher profile that SPC has in Micronesian countries due to the establishment of their Northern Pacific Office in Pohnpei. There was a strong feeling that a, “duly dedicated sub regional office and representatives based in Micronesia it would add the value including raising the profile of the (SPREP) Strategic Plan with our national leaders, program implementers and CBOs”. It was mentioned that a sub-regional presence in Micronesia would provide greater opportunity for Micronesian countries to engage more directly with SPREP in terms of accountability and SPREP’s governance, as well as more effectively utilise the technical assistance and expertise that SPREP staff based in the sub-region would be more efficiently able to provide.

In relation to comments concerning the opportunity that a SPREP sub-regional presence would provide for more effective delivery of services to members, the SPC North Pacific Office model was frequently mentioned. For example feedback on this issue was summarised as follows. “The Micronesian Country members are now utilizing the assistance of SPC experts in both national and regional initiatives, such as the MCES working committee, health, renewable energy, food security, understand(ing) and address(ing) climate change impacts, etc.” Should SPREP establish a sub-regional presence in Micronesia it is clear that there would be expectations that by bringing SPREP staff resources closer to the north Pacific Member countries that there would be concomitant flow on of benefits, as has been perceived in the case of the SPC North Pacific Office.

**(iii) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Palau**

There is a very strong feeling amongst all environment sector stakeholders in Palau that were consulted, including government agencies, CROP agency and non-government agencies that should SPREP establish a sub-regional presence in Micronesia it should be located in Palau. The reasons put forward to support this view are numerous, and include:

- a. The Government of Palau has demonstrated a substantial commitment to supporting environmental issues as illustrated by the government legislating the world's first and only national sanctuary for shark conservation and a marine mammal sanctuary. Palau has a 'Green Fee' of USD15 payable by all travelers leaving Palau which is used to support community-based Protected Area Networks (PAN).
- b. There are very good communications links between Palau and the rest of the Pacific region. Airline arrival and departure flights occur daily, and plans are underway to purchase and lay optic cables to speed up internet services.
- c. Palau has good facilities, a good track record and support services concerning hosting Micronesian workshops or seminars on all topics of interest to SPREP as reflected in their Strategic Plan 201-2015. Palau has field sites of interest where all environment sub-sector issues can be demonstrated, including those of major interest to SPREP such as biodiversity, environmental pollution controls, marine protected areas and coral reef conservation.
- d. There are numerous community-based conservation agencies in Palau, working at both national and provincial levels that, together with the relevant government agencies involved with the environment sector would benefit from SPREP expertise based in Palau. Additionally, it was mentioned that these agencies are also in a good position to provide feedback to SPREP staff concerning environmental policies and operational issues to the mutual advantage of all agencies involved.
- e. As mentioned in more detail below, the Government of Palau would facilitate the establishment and ongoing work of a SPREP office in Palau by providing various assistance, just as they have to other regional and international agencies based in Koror, such as SPC, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the United Nations (UN) Joint Presence Initiative Office.
- f. Palau currently hosts a number of sub-regional agencies involved with the environment sector, such as the Micronesian Shark Foundation, the Micronesian Challenge Office, as well as the Pacific International Coral Reef Research Center (PICRC).
- g. In the past there have been project implementation issues that have delayed and affected SPREP supported projects in Palau. It was mentioned that if SPREP had a physically closer working relationship then this would facilitate the smoother implementation of project activities.

- h. And finally, a view was mentioned on a number of occasions that it was only fair that a CROP agency be located in Palau in order to spread the benefits of having a CROP agency in more than one sub-regional Member country. By SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Palau it would be seen as recognising and rewarding Palau, as it were, for the innovative and exceptional commitments and advances they have made to establish the world's first shark and marine mammal sanctuaries, as well as acknowledge the investment made to stimulate community-based environmental awareness and biodiversity conservation.

**(iv) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Palau**

As mentioned above, should it be decided to establish a sub-regional presence in Palau the government would provide substantial support to SPREP. This support would involve legal, financial, fiscal and other assistance, just as they have for other regional and international agencies located in Palau. For example, the Government of Palau would negotiate with SPREP a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or Host Government Agreement (HGA) that would reflect the legal status of SPREP's Palau entity, and govern their operational activities in the same way that they have with SPC, JICA and the UN. Key clauses in the MOU or HCA include tax free status for staff, tax exemption for imported staff and office good and effects, including vehicles, as well as the provision of unrestricted work permits for SPREP staff spouses. Feedback from CROP and other agencies with similar MOUs and/or HCAs with the Government of Palau indicate that the arrangements are working very well.

In terms of financial and fiscal support for a SPREP sub-regional presence based in Palau, the government has indicated that they would facilitate the availability of office space and other support according to availability. For example, a number of options for office space were mentioned including co-locating with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism or at the underutilised PICRC building in Koror. The government also indicated a willingness to facilitate assisting SPREP open bank accounts, including foreign exchange accounts, as well as identifying suitable housing for SPREP staff, given that there is no formal real estate or domestic house rental agency in Koror.

**(v) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Palau**

Given the above comments on the interest and support for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Palau by both government and CBOs, as well as the scale of the SPREP activities in biodiversity and climate change in Micronesia, SPREP could consider the option available to relocate staff involved with these projects to Palau. Firstly, given the substantial amount of commitment, attention and activity concerning biodiversity and climate change issues not only in Palau, but in the sub-region, it could be conceivable that the majority of SPREP staff involved with these sub-sectors in Micronesia be incrementally relocated to Palau. This would entail establishing a SPREP sub-regional office in Palau with a focus on biodiversity and climate change, which will have the ability and resources to service the needs other Micronesian countries. Additionally, other SPREP staff with expertise in other areas could be located in Palau in order to facilitate a critical mass of SPREP staff to service the needs of Micronesia in other environment sub-sectors, such as pollution and solid waste management (SWM).

As there is no other CROP agency located in Palau, co-location at this stage is not an option, nor is the establishment of a national office, such as the SPC Solomon Island Office not practical due to the scale and complexity of the Micronesian sub-regional aspects of the SPREP supported biodiversity and climate change initiatives. Placing one or two out posted SPREP staff in Palau is also not a realistic option given the comments above.

## **2. The Republic of the Marshall Islands**

### **(i) Role of SPREP in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)**

According to government and NGO personnel consulted, SPREP has had a long history of working in RMI due to SPREP previously assisting with issues such as the development of a national plan to address oil spills, as well as providing training to a range of stakeholders in the area of multi-lateral agreements. SPREP assistance was also noted concerning their input into the RMI National Climate Change Policy, as well as the Joint National Action Plan on Disaster Risk management. RMI also has an MOU with SPREP to coordinate the Pacific Adaptation on Climate Change as it is rolled out in RMI. Other SPREP projects mentioned included a biodiversity conservation projects in the late 1990s, a waste management project involving persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and a waste management national implementation plan.

### **(i) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

The support for SPREP to establish a sub-regional office in Micronesia was strongly supported by all in RMI who were consulted. The option for SPREP to establish a presence in Fiji or Solomon Islands, rather than Micronesia was not supported as it was felt that the impact for the Micronesian sub-region would be minimal. The advantages mentioned for SPREP establishing a presence in the sub-region included communication benefits if a SPREP office was closer, cost effective travel to support project initiatives in the northern Pacific, as well as the benefits to SPREP of having inputs at the political level through the MPS and the MCES. Additionally, some agencies indicated they would welcome SPREP as a resource to facilitate new initiatives and as a very valuable, more readily accessible partner. The delayed formal government response to the question of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Micronesia to some extent concerns uncertainty about their *modus operandi* and structure. However, there appears no doubt that the concept was well received.

### **(ii) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Marshall Islands**

Whilst at time of writing the Government of RMI had not formulated their stance on this question, individuals consulted were generally in favour, noting that there would be direct spin-off benefits to RMI agencies involved with the environment sector, especially given the current challenges of climate change, POPs and water quality issues. The establishment of a stand alone sub-regional office in RMI versus a co-location arrangement did not seem to be an issue given that there is no existing CROP or regional agencies in RMI with spare office space that could be shared with SPREP. Some agencies interviewed mentioned that RMI has demonstrated that they are able to support international agencies, such as the various diplomatic representatives stationed at Majuro, as well as the PNA.

**(iii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Marshall Islands**

As mentioned above, it is premature to comment on legal, financial, fiscal and other assistance should it be decided to establish a sub-regional presence in RMI, other than to add that should RMI decide to support such an office, their support would be forthcoming and adequate for SPREP needs. This support would involve, just as they have for other regional and CROP agencies located in RMI, such as the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and SPC. For example, the Government of RMI would negotiate with SPREP a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or Host Government Agreement (HGA) that would reflect the legal status of SPREP's RMI entity, and govern their operational activities in the same way that they have with PNA, SPC, JICA and the UN. Key clauses in the MOU or HGA include tax free status for staff, tax exemption for imported staff and office goods and effects, including vehicles, as well as the provision of unrestricted work permits for SPREP staff spouses. Feedback from CROP and other agencies with similar MOUs and/or HGAs with the Government of RMI indicate that the arrangements are working very well.

In terms of financial and fiscal support for a SPREP sub-regional presence based in RMI, the government has indicated that they are currently drafting their formal view which, at time of writing, was not available to be included in this report.

**(iv) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in the Marshall Islands**

Given the operational aspects of SPREP's work in the environment sector it could be appropriate for SPREP to be co-located with a number of RMI government agencies, such as the Ministry of Resources and Development or the Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination. It could also be conceivable that SPREP could establish a presence in the RMI by being located in their own office, such as the case with the PNA. This latter option would allow SPREP to incrementally expand the scale of operations concerning projects supported and staff placements.

**3. Federated States of Micronesia**

**(v) Role of SPREP in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)**

Feedback from the FSM national and Pohnpei State governments indicate that SPREP have not only had a long and productive relationship with FSM, but some years ago SPREP posted a staff member to FSM. He left once the project ended, which was expected. However, there have been many other well regarded initiatives between SPREP and FSM since that time, including a POPs project, the current PACC project in Kosrae, a GEF funded invasive species control project, EIA training, and assistance to facilitate FSM's Stockholm Convention accession.

**(vi) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

Like Palau and RMI, FSM government and NGO staff are positive about SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Micronesia albeit prefaced with concerns about their *modus operandi* and structure. For example, it was pointed out that if SPREP was to operate in Micronesia by creating a ‘trust fund’ that would potentially siphon off funds that currently are received from donors by other FSM agencies, then the SPREP presence would not be welcomed. Additionally, if SPREP was to implement projects rather than support other agencies, especially those with a strong community base that have traditionally been the environment project implementers, then they would not be seen as operating in a developmentally sound way.

**(vii) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Federated States of Micronesia**

The support for SPREP to establish a sub-regional office in Micronesia was strongly supported by all in FSM who were consulted. As was articulated by people in RMI during the consultations, the option for SPREP to establish a presence in Fiji or Solomon Islands, rather than Micronesia was not supported as it was felt that the impact for the Micronesian sub-region would be minimal. The advantages mentioned for SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in FSM included references to organisations in Pohnpei that are already established and functioning well, such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, SPC, the UN Joint Presence Initiative, the role of FSM as providing a sub-regional transport and communications hub, the growing national conservation awareness, the stable social and political system, as well as the firm support from government at all levels.

In relation to the question of the structure of a SPREP sub-regional office, co-location was more often mentioned as the favoured arrangement. As SPC is currently well established in Pohnpei, there was noted some attraction to have a ‘joint’ CROP agency office, similar to the UN’s Micronesian joint offices in Palau, RMI and FSM. The difference being that the UN joint offices represented the three UN agencies of UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP. The consensus of most agencies consulted was that a joint CROP office would allow the CROP agencies to maintain their identities by not sharing a manager who would represent all the CROP agencies, but rather allow each CROP agency to have their own separate agency head, and simply basically co-locate in the one building.

However, if SPREP was to co-locate with SPC in the current SPC building, it may present somewhat of a dilemma for a number of reasons. Firstly, although the ground floor is currently vacant and in need of the planned renovations, advice from the Pohnpei State Governor’s office suggests that the current SPC building may be structurally unsound, to the point where the Governor has called for the building to be surveyed by a civil engineer to ascertain its soundness. Secondly, although SPC support the principle of SPREP co-locating with them during their initial stages of establishing a presence in Micronesia, and have generously offered to accommodate the embryonic SPREP north Pacific presence, the SPC North Pacific Office continues to be in an expansion mode and may not be able to sustain their co-location offer for long into the future. Therefore the SPC co-location option for SPREP looks initially attractive. If it were to proceed, SPREP would need to make sure that the current building housing SPC in Pohnpei is structurally

sound and any ground floor renovations satisfactorily undertaken, as well as be prepared to re-locate should SPC require the space for their expansion.

Although in its infancy regarding planning and funding, the Government of FSM have an ambitious plan to construct what has become known as the ‘Micronesian Village’, a complex of purpose built office and cultural facilities in the heart of Pohnpei. Land has been allocated and support has been forthcoming from the national and Pohnpei state governments, SPC and various cultural groups. The estimated budget for the initial construction design is around USD15 million which would allow a number of key buildings to be completed within a 2 – 3 year construction period. Should the Micronesian Village development receive donor funding then construction is said to be able to proceed quickly, which could provide CROP and other agencies with a permanent home, including any proposed SPREP sub-regional office in the northern Pacific.

**(viii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Federated States of Micronesia**

As mentioned above, should SPREP decide to establish a sub-regional presence in FSM the government would provide substantial support to SPREP This support would involve legal, financial, fiscal and other assistance, just as they have for other regional and international agencies located in FSM, such as SPC, the UN Joint Presence Initiative, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (W&CPFC) and various diplomatic missions, such as Australia, Japan, USA and the People’s Republic of China. For example, the Government of FSM would negotiate with SPREP a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or Host Country Agreement (HCA) that would reflect the legal status of SPREP’s FSM entity, and govern their operational activities in the same way that they have with SPC, W&CPFC, and the UN. Key clauses in the MOU or HCA include tax free status for staff, tax exemption for imported staff and office good and effects, including vehicles, as well as the provision of unrestricted work permits for SPREP staff spouses. Feedback from CROP and other agencies with similar MOUs and/or HCAs with the Government of FSM indicate that the arrangements are working very well.

In terms of financial and fiscal support for a SPREP sub-regional presence based in FSM, the government has indicated that they would facilitate the availability of office space, although their preference is for any SPREP presence in FSM to initially be co-located with SPC. The government also indicated a willingness to facilitate assisting SPREP open bank accounts, including foreign exchange accounts, as well as identifying suitable housing for SPREP staff, given that there is no formal real estate or domestic house rental agency in FSM.

**(vi) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in the Federated States of Micronesia**

Given the strong feeling expressed by the Government of FSM concerning any initial SPREP presence be co-located with SPC, the option of SPREP establishing a stand alone office in Pohnpei, such as the UN Joint Presence Initiative seems remote. Even if the current SPC office is confirmed as being condemned and unsafe for habitation SPC would have to evacuate in order to demonstrate a duty of care towards staff and visitors, the Government of FSM would feel obliged to re-locate them in another suitable office

building that presumably SPREP could share. The option of a SPREP staff member, or members being attached for a long period to a FSM government department, or posted to one of the other three FSM states, seems unlikely, given the interest within FSM for SPREP to establish a permanent office as part of a CROP agency presence in FSM.

#### **4. Papua New Guinea**

##### **(ix) Role of SPREP in Papua New Guinea**

SPREP has been supporting project activities in Papua New Guinea (PNG) over many decades, and some of the more memorable initiatives involving SPREP have included a Pesticides and Heavy Metals project with UNEP in the mid-1980s, a Chemical Profile for PNG and support for biodiversity, particularly turtle conservation. The PNG Focal Point for SPREP at the government level is the Department of Environment and Conservation, whilst the Institutional Focal Points are the University of PNG in Port Moresby and the University of Technology in Lae. A number of PNG nationals who are now in senior positions and still actively working in the environment sector have previously worked for SPREP.

##### **(x) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

The support in PNG for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Melanesia is overwhelmingly positive. All the people and organisations in PNG contacted during the consultancy expressed very strong support for SPREP to set up an office with an initial staff focus on climate change and biodiversity. The reasons put forward to support this view included the view that the SPREP strategic priorities would be enhanced as the Secretariat became more visible and improved its communication with Members in the sub-region, leading to more improved and effective service delivery. Additionally, there was a feeling that by establishing a presence in the Melanesian sub-region the Secretariat would be better placed to understand the mechanisms and politics of how things are done in this particular sub-region.

##### **(xi) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in PNG**

Whilst most of the PNG informants were very enthusiastic about SPREP establishing a presence in their sub-region, the location of the sub-regional office in PNG was not an issue of great concern. Of more importance was the Secretariat being permanently located somewhere in the sub-region where PNG could have more direct access than is currently the case with the Secretariat based in Apia, Samoa. In fact a strong argument against locating a SPREP office in PNG concerned the fact that most of the neighbouring Melanesian countries have less capacity to support their environment sector activities than PNG, so it would be logical for SPREP to base a sub-regional presence in either Solomon Islands or Vanuatu. There was a preference in PNG for the initial SPREP office to be co-located with either a CROP agency or sub-regional agency, such as FFA or the Melanesian Spearhead Group respectively.



**(xii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in PNG**

Should SPREP decide to establish a sub-regional presence in PNG the government has indicated that it would provide support to SPREP. This support would involve legal, financial, fiscal and other assistance, just as they have for other regional and international agencies located in Port Moresby, such as SPC and various diplomatic missions, such as Australia, Japan, USA and the People's Republic of China. For example, the Government of PNG would negotiate with SPREP a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or Host Country Agreement (HCA) that would reflect the legal status of SPREP's PNG entity, and govern their operational activities in the same way that they have with SPC. Key clauses in the MOU or HCA include tax free status for staff, tax exemption for imported staff and office good and effects, including vehicles, as well as the provision of unrestricted work permits for SPREP staff spouses.

In terms of financial and fiscal support for a SPREP sub-regional presence based in PNG, the government has indicated that they would facilitate the availability of office space, although their preference is for any SPREP presence in PNG to initially be co-located with the PNG Focal Point, i.e. the Department of Environment and Conservation.. The government also indicated a willingness to facilitate assisting SPREP establish a PNG presence, including identifying suitable housing for SPREP staff, noting that house rental costs and general operating costs in Port Moresby are very high.

**(xiii) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in PNG**

As mentioned above, the Government of PNG would be willing to assist SPREP establish a presence in Port Moresby, or another location, such as Madang or Lae. The preferred option for a SPREP office in PNG would be to co-locate, although as was done with the SPC PNG National Office, a stand alone office could also be an option, although it would be very expensive. Although the logical co-location option with the Department of Environment and Conservation has been suggested, another option would be to co-locate with, or be hosted by the University of PNG, the major SPREP institutional focal point.

**5. Solomon Islands**

**(xiv) Role of SPREP in Solomon Islands**

According to government and CROP agency staff consulted, SPREP has had a long history of working in Solomon Islands due to SPREP previously assisting with issues such as the development of a national plan to address climate change, turtle conservation research and monitoring, the development of the national protected areas legislation, as well as providing capacity building by means of providing training to a range of stakeholders in the areas of biodiversity and climate change. SPREP also assisted Solomon Islands with the PIGARET project and the PACC. As pollution issues, including solid waste management are important issues in Solomon Islands, SPREP assisted with POPs activities and involved Solomon Islanders in POPs meetings.

**(xv) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

All organisations consulted in Honiara welcomed the possibility of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence, based on their expectation that having SPREP staff sub-regionally based would go a long way to assist the Secretariat in not only improving its image as a regional entity mandated to assist Members in managing their environment, but would in time assist improve service delivery and become more effective and relevant to Members in Melanesia. This in turn would contribute to mutual gains as Members would more effectively access SPREP technical assistance and contribute to cost effectively contributing to national capacity building, as well as the Secretariat benefiting from Members making better use of resources and participating more fully in SPREP organisational issues.

**(xvi) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Solomon Islands**

The Government of Solomon Islands and all other organisations consulted, including CROP and international agencies were all supportive of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Honiara. For example, the government has offered assistance to SPREP to locate appropriate office space and help with finding suitable housing for SPREP staff, in an environment where suitable rental accommodation has not been easy to come by for expatriate staff newly arrived in Honiara.

**(xvii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Solomon Islands**

There appear no significant legal, financial geographic or other barriers to SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Solomon Islands. Over the past few years a number of organisations have established a presence in Honiara, including SPC, the Commonwealth Governance Facility and the UN Joint Presence Initiative. The government has facilitated the establishment of these organisations, all of which are examples where a sub-regional presence has resulted in positive outcomes for both the Solomon Islands and the organisations. The government has signed either an HCA or MOU with each of these organisations and continues to support them as they recruit staff, import equipment and develop their national, as well as sub-regional program activities.

**(xviii) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Solomon Islands**

The preference most frequently suggested for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Solomon Islands concerned the co-location option due to the cost effectiveness of co-locating with an established, like minded organisation, such as the SPC Solomon Island Country Office, FFA or the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster management and Meteorology. In discussions with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, they would welcome SPREP establishing an office within their building, but there is clearly limited space available in what seems an already crowded office environment. The option of SPREP establishing in Honiara in a CROP agency office was suggested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade. However, following a visit to the SPC Solomon Island Country Office, the Officer-in-Charge expressed support for the idea, but also indicated that due to SPC staff office accommodation requirements, it would be presently impractical for SPREP to co-locate with them.

One other possibility would be for SPREP to co-locate with FFA. The FFA Director-General suggested this option and has kindly offered office accommodation for an initial, modest number of SPREP specialists. FFA currently hosts a number of other agencies, including staff from the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Asia, Caribbean, Pacific (ACP) Fisheries Program.

## **6. Fiji**

### **(xix) Role of SPREP in Fiji**

SPREP has, for many years supported the Government of Fiji with a number of important projects in the environment sector. These activities include Managing for the Future : A project to reverse degradation of coral reefs and related ecosystems and enhance livelihoods in the Pacific Islands Region (CRISP; Review-Implementation of the Regional Wetlands Action Plan for the Pacific Islands Workshop; Pacific Regional Consultation on the International Regime on Access & Benefit Sharing; Regional Workshop for the Pacific Countries on the preparation of the Fourth National Report of the Convention on Biological Diversity; Marine Species Research and Conservation; Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) in ACP Countries; Waste Reduction Campaign; SPILLCON 2010-Asia Pacific International Oil Spill Prevention & Preparedness Conference; and the Pacific Biodiversity and Climate Change Ecosystem-based Adaptation Analysis and Needs Assessments Meeting and Review of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change Meeting.

A significant amount of capacity building in the form of training and workshops have been provided by SPREP to many government officers working in the environment sector, as well as SPREP providing an impressive amount of capacity supplementation support to Suva-based Department of Environment staff.

### **(xx) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

The Government of Fiji has indicated that they support the concept of SPREP establishing a presence in the Melanesian sub-region, although at time of writing were uncommitted to any particular location for the sub-regional presence.

### **(xxi) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Fiji**

Whilst the notion of a SPREP sub-regional presence in Fiji has not been disregarded by staff of the Department of Environment, advice provided in Suva during the consultancy indicates that it is premature to provide more detailed comments at this stage.

**(xxii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Fiji**

Although specific details of the Government of Fiji's intentions regarding possible support to SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Fiji have not been articulated, the Department of Environment is of the opinion that the government would provide appropriate legal, financial, fiscal and other appropriate support to a SPREP sub-regional presence should it be located in Fiji. However, as mentioned above, this has yet to be formally confirmed pending further internal discussions with the appropriate authorities in Suva.

**(xxiii) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Fiji**

Should SPREP decide to establish a sub-regional presence in Fiji, there appears to be a number of options that could be further examined concerning where the SPREP presence could be housed. One feasible option mentioned by SPC was for SPREP to co-locate with SPC in Nabua, rather than with the SPC SOPAC Division at Tamavua, as there is currently no space at the Tamavua SPC office. The Nabua co-location arrangement would be seen as a reciprocal arrangement to the current SPC office currently co-located with SPREP in Apia. The Department of Environment indicated their interest for SPREP to be more closely accessible to them in Suva, but no indication was provided as to the possibility of co-location with them.

**7. Vanuatu**

**(xxiv) Role of SPREP in Vanuatu**

SPREP have had a long and appreciated association with Vanuatu. Some of the memorable projects supported over the years include the assistance with RAMSAR, the Pacific Island Climate Change Adaptation Project (PICCAP), a number of meteorology workshops, as well as various capacity building training activities. Like other countries in Melanesia, the SPREP presence in Vanuatu is considered to have been limited to the often mentioned unpopular, 'fly-in-fly-out' approach to supporting Members that SPREP advisers are said to be frequently employing.

**(xxv) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

There is a very strong support in all agencies consulted for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Melanesia. The benefits cited were consistent with the views from PNG, Fiji and Solomon Islands. Of particular interest to Vanuatu would be having SPREP located in the sub-region as a resource for them to more easily access not just climate change and biodiversity conservation assistance, as was mentioned by PNG and Solomon Islands, but also the meteorology services that have been strengthened by the merging of SOPAC's former meteorology resources with those of SPREP's.

The particular location of any future SPREP sub-regional presence does not appear to be an issue in Vanuatu, but they agree with PNG and Fiji that it would best serve Melanesian countries for it to be located in either Solomon Islands or Vanuatu, as these countries have limited capacity in the environment sector compared to Fiji and PNG. Additionally, the emphasis that both Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are giving

environmental issues, especially climate change and biodiversity conservation suggest that the resources that a SPREP presence closer to hand would be well received and assist in more efficient use of SPREP's expertise in these sub-sectors.

**(xxvi) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Vanuatu**

The Government of Vanuatu is very supportive of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Port Vila. Not only would the SPREP resources be readily accessed for the sub-sectors mentioned above, but other key environmental areas that the government are prioritising, such as waste management could also directly benefit. Additionally, government have recently legislated reforms to environmental regulations bringing them in line with world's best practice and have drafted other legislation to assist with environment protection, such as the 'Green Fee' arrangement that Palau has instigated to assist ensure sustainable funding for local, community managed marine and terrestrial protected areas.

Additionally, the government has offered support to SPREP should they decide to establish a sub-regional presence in Vanuatu, by means of providing office space and assistance with the spectrum of the usual issues covered in a Host Country Agreement (HCA) A copy of a generic HCA is included in this report at Annex 4.

**(xxvii) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Vanuatu**

There appear to be no legal, financial, fiscal or geographic impediments to SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Vanuatu. In reality, should an HCA be signed between the government and SPREP the implications for smooth working relationship will be numerous. As mentioned above, the ready access that all agencies working with environmental issues in the country will be potentially intensified and the impact maximised depending upon the extent of the SPREP presence and the government's ability to honour their HCA obligations.

**(v) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in Vanuatu**

The most attractive option for SPREP to establish a presence in Vanuatu would be to co-locate with an existing regional or CROP agency, such as the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) or SPC. Both these agencies have a presence in Port Vila and have HCAs with the government that governs their operations. The MSG may be able to offer SPREP office space but at time of writing it was unclear to what extent they may be able to accommodate SPREP.

Additionally, the government has offered SPC a large residential house to use for their office, but SPC have not been able to move in due to the necessary renovations being incomplete. This house could accommodate at least 6 work stations which SPC may not initially require and so free up a couple for SPREP's use. This arrangement would see SPC and SPREP co-locating and represent a joint CROP agency presence, similar to the UN Joint Presence initiative.

Another option would be for SPREP to co-locate with the Vanuatu Meteorology Service (VMS) The VMS also host the Vanuatu National Adaptation Committee on Climate Change Secretariat, and have a newly built office and apparently may have spare office space. The co-location option is preferred as it would allow SPREP to begin operations in Port Vila on a small scale and incrementally enlarge their presence over time should their programme activities in Vanuatu and the sub-region grow.

## **8. Cook Islands**

### **(i) Role of SPREP in the Cook Islands**

SPREP has provided a range of technical assistance to the Cook Islands, including Review-Implementation of the Regional Wetlands Action Plan for the Pacific Islands Workshop; Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species Project; Pacific Regional Consultation on the International Regime on Access & Benefit Sharing ; Integrated Island Biodiversity Project; Regional Workshop for the Pacific Countries on the preparation of the Fourth National Report of the Convention on Biological Diversity; Marine Species Meeting; Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA); E-waste in Pacific Island Countries; SPILLCON 2010-Asia Pacific International Oil Spill Prevention & Preparedness Conference; Pacific Biodiversity and Climate Change Ecosystem-based Adaptation Analysis and Needs Assessments; PIGGAREP; and the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project.

### **(ii) General view of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

The Government of the Cook Islands is of the view that any SPREP sub-regional presence would best be undertaken in partnership with all CROP agencies working closely together provide effective delivery of services to all Member countries.

### **(iii) View of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Cook Islands**

The feedback from the Government of the Cook Islands on the question of establishing a sub-regional SPREP office to assist the SPREP Strategic Plan priorities being best achieved includes a comment that they believe that the SPREP Secretariat is the best place to achieve Strategic Plan priorities.

### **(iv) Legal, financial, fiscal, geographic or other implications of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in the Cook Islands**

As the Government of the Cook Islands believes that the SPREP Secretariat is the best place to achieve Strategic Plan priorities, they have advised that they will have difficulty providing more funding and resources to establish any sub-regional offices.

### **(xxviii) Options for SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in the Cook Islands**

See comments above.

**(b) Donor partner feedback**

**(1) Government Australia views on SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

Although the Government of Australia is of the view that the establishment of a sub-regional presence by itself will not contribute to effective delivery of the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015, they see some possible benefits to SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence. These benefits include facilitating coordination with other CROP agencies and so broadly support SPREP extending its reach across its members. They note the area of climate change as one area where a sub-regional presence could benefit from SPREP and other CROP agencies collaborating by means of a SPREP sub-regional presence. However, they require a detailed cost/benefit analysis in order to determine if a sub-regional presence would lead to increased efficiency and effectiveness for SPREP in any of the sub-regions. They suggest this analysis should consider various forms of a sub-regional presence, including establishing a sub-regional office independent of another CROP agency, to one that is co-located with another CROP agency, or to an arrangement where SPREP second staff to other CROP agencies. Australia would expect that any possible sub-regional presence should be cost neutral to the Secretariat and would be considered as part of SPREP's multi-year agreement with Australia.

**(2) Government of New Zealand views on SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence**

While acknowledging SPREP's efforts to investigate ways of improving its impact in the region, the view of the Government of New Zealand concerning the concept of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence is one option for SPREP to address Strategic Plan 2011-2015 priorities. They note that there are a number of factors that would influence a sub-regional presence resulting in more effective delivery of services to members. These factors include the size and type of Post, the host country context and the extent of SPREP's programme both within the host country and in the sub-region. The possibility of some benefits from a sub-regional presence are noted, including assistance with national priority setting and programme monitoring and evaluation, increased country ownership, as well as improved environmental performance and national capacity to manage natural resources. They also note the need for details of the context of any proposed sub-regional presence model, including costs. Additionally they need to be convinced that a sub-regional office will deliver cost-savings and free up administrative and programme resources for national level activities. Whilst co-location with another CROP agency is mentioned as probably the most sensible option, factors such as SPREP programme size, transport links to other sub-regions, security and accommodation costs were also mentioned. New Zealand also mentioned that they would not augment their funding to SPREP for the establishment of a sub-regional office and that they would rather see SPREP consolidate its current efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its Apia-based campus in line with RIF recommendations and SPREP's Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

## **(c) Partner and other agency feedback**

### **1) Palau Conservation Society**

The Palau Conservation Society (PCS) is the largest of the numerous Palauan non-governmental organisations specialising in the environment sector. Founded in 1995, PCS takes a full ecosystem approach to conservation at the community level. Their Strategic Plan 2011-2015 underlines their respect for Palauan culture and the science of conservation. They rely on partnerships at national and local levels to target their focus on the conservation of coral reef ecosystems, forested ecosystems, mangroves and seagrass. Operationally, PCS has four programmes, including Conservation and Protected Areas, Policy and Planning, Communication and Outreach, and Administration and Development. PCS help States access resources for Protected Area Networks (PAN) via the Micronesian Challenge, a capacity building and funding mechanism.

PCS has links with SPREP stemming from SPREP's previously supported conservation education and outreach activities, as well as the provision of off island training for PCS staff. PCS also is a member of Birdlife International (BLI) which has resulted in an MOU with SPREP. Although PCS would not foresee any substantial direct involvement with a SPREP sub-regional presence in Micronesia, they would welcome the initiative given SPREP's track record in the environment sector and the additional profile that SPREP could potentially give it.

### **2) Sustainable Decisions**

Sustainable Decisions (SS) is a non-government agency that focuses on providing information about community conservation issues for decision makers to use to assist policy formulation. They are committed to ensuring that policy makers are aware of current environmental science principles and practice so that policies are based on good science and relevant to Palau. SD are very supportive of SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Micronesia due to countries in the sub-region being more able to access SPREP technical expertise and technical assistance. SD also expect that a SPREP sub-regional presence would lift SPREP's profile and lead to an increased engagement with SPREP activities. Additionally, SD believe that there would be mutual advantages concerning accountability and result in countries becoming more involved with SPREP governance which could result in increased levels of cooperation between Members and SPREP management.

## **(d) CROP and other regional agency feedback**

### **1) Secretariat of the Pacific Community**

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) has had a strategic plan to decentralise ever since the Director-General, in 2008 presented the SPC's governing body, the CRGA with a vision of a network of offices, strategically positioned in terms of functions and geographical locations to provide the best support possible to Members. To some extent, the momentum to decentralise was in response to SPC's corporate plan reviewer's view that SPC should move its services closer to the people it served. The Noumea HQ and Suva sub-regional central Pacific office have been



long standing, whilst the Pohnpei North Pacific office was established and functioning in 2009. Three national offices, closely linked to specific projects were established in the Solomon Islands, (Honiara), Papua New Guinea (Port Moresby), and Vanuatu (Port Vila). According to SPC, having a presence in the north Pacific and the two western Pacific Member countries has made a discernable and positive difference to perceptions of SPC's role and its ability to provide services and respond promptly to requests from Members in the sub-regions.

Given the above scenario, it is no wonder that SPC is a keen supporter of SPREP's exploratory efforts to look at options to increase their presence in the two sub-regions of Micronesia and Melanesia. There is a truism in the disciplines of economics and management that suggest that by providing services one creates needs. In the case of SPC the needs were clearly there for greater use by Members of SPC's services, as the above paragraph describes and the presence of SPC technical staff to provide services have given the decentralisation approach the impetus for Members to take advantage of the more readily accessible SPC resources that are reportedly now being increasingly delivered in a more cost effective and efficient manner.

## **2) Forum Fisheries Agency**

The Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) was established in Honiara, Solomon Islands in 1979 by sixteen member countries of the then South Pacific Forum to help them manage and develop their "living marine resources ..... and in particular the highly migratory species" such as the vast tuna stocks of the western and central Pacific ocean.

The work of FFA specifically involves collection and dissemination of fisheries data, the provision of technical assistance and policy coordination to facilitate legislative responses to the increasing commercial pressure on the Pacific's tuna fishery. They have built a reputation for competent management, high professional standards amongst their staff of approximately 75, effective use of resources and prompt responses to calls for assistance from Member countries.

FFA would not only encourage and welcome a SPREP presence in the sub-region, but also undertake to do whatever they can to facilitate SPREP's physical entrée into Melanesia, to the extent that they would be prepared to offer SPREP accommodation in their Honiara office, similar to the cost saving arrangement that they have offered other agencies that have co-located with them. These agencies include the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Africa, Asia and Pacific (ACP) Fisheries Project and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). FFA has a Host Country Agreement with the Government of the Solomon Islands that has served them well over the decades, despite this HCA being negotiated when FFA was initially established.

### **3) The Joint Presence Initiative of the United Nations**

The Joint Presence Initiative of the United Nations was conceived as a response to the demands of a number of Pacific island countries and a means to better deal with the development challenges that the Small Island States are facing. It is also an initiative to bring the UN closer to the countries it serves by having a presence in several Pacific island countries. The Joint Presence Initiative strategy essentially aims to make sure that the UN decentralisation process at country level in the Pacific region ensures that one of the three UN agencies most relevant to a particular country's national development plan, that is, either UNICEF, UNDP or UNFPA, takes on a lead UN agency role in a particular country. For example, in FSM UNFPA is the lead UN agency. In Palau it is UNDP. In Vanuatu it is UNICEF. As one person described it, it's a 'one stop shop' for access to the UN agencies, and gives credibility to the UN reform agenda based on the notion of , 'Delivering As One', as the UN in the Pacific Small Island States experience the, 'One Team as One UN' approach to meeting their development goals.

The framework under which the Joint Presence Initiative offices function is linked to each country's national development plan, the Pacific Plan, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the overarching UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Pacific Sub-Region 2008 – 2012. The UNDAF was developed in close consultation with Pacific island governments, civil society and development partners and focuses on four main areas, including equitable economic growth and poverty reduction; good governance and human rights; equitable social and protection services; and sustainable environmental management.

All of the Pacific island countries that host a UN Joint Presence Initiative office are all SPREP members and include FSM, Kiribati, RMI, Nauru, Palau, Vanuatu and Tuvalu. Each country has a specific focus or emphasis that the Joint Presence Initiative office implements with one of the three UN agencies mentioned above acting as a lead UN agency, with responsibility to ensure that they provide linkages to other UN agencies such as WHO, ILO, FAO, etc that the country may need to contact. In some Joint Presence Initiative offices staff from all three UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNFPA or UNDP may be present, but one agency will be nominated to take a leading role to coordinate the UN presence. Although the UN Joint Presence Initiative has been operating in the Pacific since 2008, it should be noted that this strategy has not been formally reviewed or evaluated to confirm that this strategy is appropriate and meeting mutual expectations, anecdotal evidence from both governments and UN staff indicate it provides a valuable resource at the national level. Other Pacific island countries have requested the UN continue to replicate the strategy, with Tonga being mentioned as the next country in line to enjoy the benefits of a UN Joint Presence Initiative in the near future.

The UN Joint Presence Initiative is of interest to CROP and regional agencies in general and SPREP in particular as it provides a model whereby CROP and, or regional agency staff may co-locate in one office, with one CROP or regional agency taking the lead. It lends itself to the notion of a, 'one stop CROP or regional agency shop', that illustrates more efficient and cost effect resource mobilisation, especially in an environment where a number of CROP or regional agencies are engaged with a common overarching theme, such as climate change that clearly involves a multitude of sectors and sub-sectors such as public health, food security, fisheries, biodiversity, invasive species issues, gender and security, just to name a few.

#### **4) Parties to the Nauru Agreement**

Signed in Tarawa in 2009, the Bikenibeu Declaration set up the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) to serve their eight members, which include Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu. The PNA headquarters are in Majuro, Marshall Islands. The PNA has been dubbed the, "OPEC for Tuna", because it aims to control access to tuna in its waters and so increase economic benefits for its Pacific island members. PNA waters are estimated to supply approximately 25% of the world's supply of tuna.

The PNA would very much welcome SPREP establishing a sub-regional presence in Micronesia. They have found that Majuro is a good location due to the adequate office space provided by the Government of RMI, the dependable communication links by air and the reliable IT service. They have signed a comprehensive MOU with the government of RMI which they have found adequate to meet their needs.

#### **5) Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission**

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (W&CPFC), also known as the Tuna Commission was established in Pohnpei, in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) in 2004. The W&CPFC has established a number of monitoring, control and surveillance programs to promote compliance by Commission members with conservation and management measures, such as the Regional Observer Program which manages the placement of personnel on board fishing vessels to observe and collect data on fishing operations.

The W&CPFC inspects fishing vessels on the high seas by using patrol vessels involved with routine boarding and inspection of fishing vessels operating throughout the Pacific Ocean. The patrol vessels provide the Commission with an important tool with which to monitor and in some cases, take action against, fishing violations on the high seas.

The Commission membership comprises Pacific island nations and distant waters fishing nations, such as Japan, U.S.A. and Taiwan. They have a staff of 21 professional and technical advisers that provide services to their members. They also sub-contract out some of the scientific research related to the Pacific regional tuna fisheries.

The Tuna Commission has had very little involvement with SPREP but nevertheless would welcome SPREP's presence in the sub-region as there may be future opportunities for some project collaboration where SPREP's marine focused activities require data that the Tuna Commission may be able to provide.

The location of the Tuna Commission in Pohnpei has been positive for the organisation as well as for the local community. They estimate that their annual economic footprint includes thousands of dollars spent on consumables, over 3,000 nights per year that Tuna Commission visitors spend in Pohnpei attending conferences and workshops, as well as the economic impact that staff salaries contribute to the local economy. The costs of delivering their services from Pohnpei justify their location in the Micronesian hub as this adds value to deliverables. They foresee that a SPREP presence in the sub-region would have similar, mutual cost benefits. They operate under a MOU with the Government of FSM that they find satisfactory, although it appears that it's not as favourable as the HCA signed with other regional or international agencies based in Pohnpei.

#### **6) Palau International Coral Reef Center**

The Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC), is a project that is part of a Common Agenda for Cooperation between Palau, Japan and the U.S.A. Launched in 1993, the partnership was created to address global issues on health problems, over-population, degradation of the environment and aftermath of natural disasters. Palau was chosen as the site for this coral reef centre due mainly to its rich biodiversity (450 identified species of coral and 1,500 species of fish), proximity to research sites and stable government.

PICRC is a semi-autonomous government entity as well as a non-profit Organisation. It was designed to assist in improving the management, use and conservation of Palau and the world's marine environment, and to serve as an educational resource, as well as a tourist attraction due to its unique aquarium exhibits. Since its opening, PICRC has assumed a number of international roles including serving as a Node Coordinator for the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), member of the Marine Resources Pacific Consortium (MAREPAC), designated as the focal point for the United States Coral Reef Task Force, co-secretariat of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) with the Government of Japan, Node Coordinator for the Western Pacific SeagrassNet Monitoring, and a member of the International Society of Mangrove Ecosystems (ISME).

There are three main programme areas of interest to SPREP and include research on Marine Protected Areas (MPA), Tropical Watershed, and Coral Reef Biology. PICRC also have an extensive aquarium that illustrates Micronesia's natural marine ecosystems. It composes nine sub-themed aquariums that represent eighteen marine and coastal habitat ecotypes. The Environmental Education and Awareness programme allows the Center to advance conservation by bridging the gap between the research community and the public in order to educate the public on the ecological, economic and cultural importance of coral reefs and their associated marine habitats. In doing so they aim to increase awareness of the value of conservation so that community members may become active environmental stewards.

In the past SPREP has primarily provided support to the PICRC in the areas of environmental education. In discussions with PICRC staff it was mentioned that they would welcome renewed collaboration with SPREP, adding that they have surplus office accommodation should SPREP be interested in establishing a sub-regional presence in Palau.

### **7) Melanesian Spearhead Group**

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat was established in 2008 in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The MSG member states include Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and the New Caledonian FLNKS. With a staff of 10 promotes and strengthens inter-membership trade, exchanges of Melanesian cultures, traditions and values, encourages economic and technical cooperation between states and contributes to the alignment of policies in order to further MSG members' shared goals of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security.

The MSG Secretariat provides service to MSG members through sound policy advice on social, economic, trade, political and legal issues; promoting and nurturing Melanesian traditions, values and cultures; enhancing partnerships and cooperation with MSG and development partners; recruiting quality staff and ensuring their continuous professional development; and making sure there is financial and administrative accountability, as well as transparency in all transactions.

There are four program areas that the MSG Secretariat focuses on, including economic growth; sustainable development; good governance; and security. Within these focus areas the MSG Secretariat has identified three programs. They are the Political Affairs Division; the Trade and Investment Promotion Division; and the Economic and Social Development Division. The SPREP counterpart in the MSG Secretariat would primarily be the Economic and Social Development Division.

The MSG Secretariat currently hosts the Office of the Chief Trade Adviser, an out-posted branch of the Suva-based Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS).

## **10. Analysis and recommendations**

As a result of discussions with a wide range of people in the Pacific sub-regions interviewed during the consultation period, including government leaders, officials, donor agency and NGO staff, there is an overwhelming view that the time has well arrived for SPREP to not only consider decentralising, but to now implement steps to establish sub-regional presences in both Micronesia and Melanesia. The anecdotal evidence that is available to support the SPC decentralisation experiences indicate that establishing a presence in sub-regions of the Pacific can have very positive impact upon both the quality and quantity of services and service delivery, at the policy, planning, implementation and capacity building levels. Comments such as, "by having SPREP closer to our doorstep will assist us make better use of SPREP's services" reflect a desire to make more efficient use of a valued resource that SPREP membership offers.

Additionally, it has not been possible to put a monetary value on the costs versus the benefits of decentralisation of the preferred structural arrangement for the SPREP sub-regional presence, the experiences of SPC, the UN Joint Presence Initiative and PNA clearly indicate that by bringing services closer to Members there are significant savings in terms of travel costs, staff times costs, procurement costs and benefits associated with increased access to professional resources to assist national planning, capacity building and knowledge management. Furthermore, as was mentioned in a few cases during the consultations, Members will feel more comfortable about contributing to SPREP governance and being able to redress the imbalance they perceive concerning member countries closer to SPREP HQ dominating SPREP programmes, decision making and planning.

The Micronesian Member countries overwhelming support the establishment of a sub-regional presence in their sub-region, mainly for the various reasons mentioned above. Although they have articulated unified thinking on this issue, they are less in agreement as to the location and structure of a SPREP sub-regional presence. What is clear about the location is that they don't feel that a SPREP sub-regional presence in Suva or Honiara, co-located with SPC or FFA respectively would advantage them as they consider these locations just as removed from their vicinity as is Apia. But should SPREP establish a sub-regional presence in Micronesia, where should it be located? Palau has made a good case for establishing it in Koror. FSM has a good case for locating it in Pohnpei. RMI has not articulated their preferences, but discussions in Majuro indicated that they seem less concerned about ownership of a SPREP presence as long as whichever location appears to support the option that best suits their needs. The key factors seem to revolve around communications and the advantage of it being in a central 'hub'. Experience with international agencies and the needs of the Members for SPREP's services are other criteria.

With regards to the above, the FSM communication links are impressive – fibre optical cable and relatively fast and reliable internet services, as well as reliable electrical power. Palau is in the process of buying a similar fibre optical cable. FSM is the centre of the hub for flights to and from Majuro and Koror, as well as north to Guam and from there to Australia, Asia, Hawai'i and the continental U.S.A., as well as, at the time of writing, to Fiji and from there to Tonga, Samoa, New Zealand, as well as to most other SPREP Member countries. All the three countries have CROP agency staff, international agencies and foreign diplomatic missions of importance to the Pacific region present on their soil although Palau is also host to agencies specifically involved with the environment sector, such as the PICRP, the Shark Sanctuary and Marine Mammal Sanctuary. All three countries have adequate to good educational facilities, health care facilities and can provide international staff with adequate housing, despite none of them having a formalised real estate agency networks. Furthermore, they all have operational HCAs or MOUs which adequately govern the operations and mutual responsibilities of the CROP and other international agencies that they host.

The question concerning the structure of the proposed SPREP sub-regional presence is another criterion to help determine the best location for SPREP in Micronesia. Palau has offered substantial, good quality office space in the PICRP compound. FSM has suggested co-location with SPC, that SPC has agreed to 'in principle', which if the building is suitable, would accommodate an initial nucleus of SPREP staff who could be relocated to the Micronesian Village once sufficient progress on that initiative eventuates.

In Melanesia, the SPREP Members are no less circumspect concerning a SPREP sub-regional presence. The support for this initiative is overwhelming and passionate, to the extent that should it be agreed to proceed, the arrangements for SPREP to begin work from a Melanesian base could seemingly occur fairly swiftly. As far as a location for a SPREP presence in Melanesia, both Fiji and PNG are of the opinion that either Honiara or Port Vila should be the venue. Their reasoning is based on their view that both PNG and Fiji have considerable capacity regarding implementing environment activities, whereas Vanuatu and Solomon Islands have limited capacity on one hand, yet substantial needs and plans for implementing environmentally sustainable initiatives. A SPREP presence in either country would go a long way to support both in their endeavours to address their priority issues and commitments concerning climate change and biodiversity conservation.

Both Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are willing to provide assistance to SPREP to establish a sub-regional presence in their countries. Given the cost effectiveness of co-locating a SPREP presence with another CROP or regional agency, both countries have indicated opportunities for this option. For example, in Solomon Islands, FFA has indicated their willingness to host an initial SPREP presence in Honiara, whereas in Vanuatu SPREP could be housed with SPC once their new premises have been renovated, or else co-located with the VMS. Should the MSG offer office space, then this option could be explored further as there may be mutual benefits for both SPREP and MSG to be co-located due to the MSG trade and investment portfolio involving mining, commercial agriculture and forestry, all areas where there are important environmental issues to be considered.

In terms of access to neighbouring countries and internal travel, both Honiara and Port Vila have frequent flights within Melanesia and to Australia and New Zealand. Their internal flight schedules are also equally impressive. The other factors to be considered regarding the location of a SPREP sub-regional office concern medical and education facilities, as well as residential housing for staff and dependants. In both Honiara and Port Vila, medical and educational facilities are adequate and comparable, whereas the housing market in Honiara is expensive and tight, compared to the reasonable range of suitable, affordable housing available for SPREP staff in Port Vila.

## **Recommendations:**

### **(A) Micronesia**

- 4) SPREP undertakes to establish a sub-regional presence in Micronesia as soon as possible, ensuring that a nucleus of relevant SPREP programmes are represented by either newly appointed or re-located staff.
- 5) SPREP explore with FSM and SPC the opportunity to co-locate an initial number of staff as mentioned above, to share office equipment and management costs, should the civil engineering assessment of the current SPC office building in Pohnpei prove to be structurally sound. Should the building prove to be unsound, FSM, undertake to obtain an alternative building for both SPC and SPREP that they all agree is suitable for a joint CROP agency presence.
- 6) FSM be encouraged to actively seek funding to construct the Micronesian Village to include accommodation for SPC, SPREP and other CROP agencies to operate a joint CROP agency presence.

**(B) Melanesia**

1) SPREP undertakes to establish a sub-regional presence in Melanesia as soon as possible, ensuring that a nucleus of relevant SPREP programmes are represented by either newly appointed or re-located staff.

2) SPREP explore with Vanuatu the opportunity to co-locate an initial number of staff as mentioned above, to share office equipment and management costs with SPC to create a 'one stop joint CROP agency presence', once the renovations to the house allocated to SPC is completed. Should this arrangement fall through, and if the MSG Secretariat is willing, SPREP should negotiate with the MSG Secretariat to co-locate with them. If this arrangement is not acceptable, then a fall back position for SPREP would be to explore the option to co-locate with the VMS.



## **11. Annexes:**

### **1. Terms of Reference**

#### **Consultancy to assist the SPREP Secretariat in exploring options for establishing a sub-regional presence in the Pacific region**

##### ***Terms of Reference May 2011***

### **1. Background**

The 21st SPREP Meeting held in Madang, Papua New Guinea in September 2010, endorsed the concept of establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region and called for the Secretariat to investigate options. The rationale for establishing a regional presence is to further strengthen and better align SPREP member activities with the 2011 – 2015 SPREP Strategic Plan and fulfil its regional mandate which is: *“To promote cooperation in the Pacific region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve its environment and ensure sustainable development for present and future generations”* The 2009 Report on the Independent Corporate Review (ICR) of SPREP called on Members to consider implementing a strategy of decentralizing Secretariat activities within the region in order to improve its effectiveness at the operational level. Rather than employing the current “fly-in, fly-out” approach, the ICR called for the placement of Secretariat staff in strategic sub-regional locations which would allow for sufficient time for both Government staff in the relevant PICTs that require extensive support, and Secretariat personnel to achieve planned outcomes. This is consistent with the current trend where some CROP, UN and other regional Organisations have already placed staff at strategic sub-regional locations in order to provide improved service to their Members. The successful consultant (consultancy) will prepare a report on all relevant options for establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP, including co-locating staff at other CROP agencies. The report will outline the financial implications of each option.

### **2. Process**

#### **The process will comprise:**

- i. Development and distribution of a questionnaire to all Members to gather key input on their views on the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP, and how it will contribute to better delivery of services to PICTs, and enable SPREP to achieve the new strategic priorities identified under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015
- ii. Development and distribution of a questionnaire to Key Partners/Donors to gather key input on their views on the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP, and how it will contribute to better delivery of services to PICTs, and enable SPREP to achieve the new strategic priorities identified under the new SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015;
- iii. Consultation with relevant/key government officials of SPREP Members through tele-conference/telephone or video conference calls;
- iv. Consultation with relevant CROP agencies regarding possibilities for collocation of SPREP staff;

- v. Consultation with staff from the SPREP Secretariat;
- vi. Consultation with relevant donors to ascertain options and interest in providing support for the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP;
- vii. Follow-up of questionnaires with SPREP Member, Territories and Partners/donors;
- viii. Consultation with certain SPREP Member countries and Territories through selected country visits by the consultant in the 3 sub-regional areas - (Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia)
- ix. Presentation of a synthesis of the responses to questionnaires and consultations with Members and Territories to SPREP Management;
- x. Development of the draft report and submission to 22nd SPREP Meeting in September 2011.

### **3. Terms of Reference of the Consultancy**

SPREP requires a consultant to assist the Secretariat in undertaking a Study/Report on the options for establishing a sub-regional regional presence for SPREP within the Pacific region with the specific tasks:

- i. Follow-up with Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs) and Partners/donors on the questionnaire to ensure that effective feedback is received;
- ii. Travel to selected Member countries and Territories in the Melanesia/Micronesia/Polynesia sub-regions and consult with relevant Government officials on options for establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP;
- iii. Provide a synthesis of key inputs from consultations with SPREP members, partners and donors including feedback on the questionnaire;
- iv. Consult and work closely with the SPREP Secretariat in finalising key inputs in the development of a draft report/study;
- v. Provide the SPREP Secretariat with a draft report/study outlining all options for the establishment of a sub-regional presence for SPREP in the Pacific region including the pros and cons and financial implications for each option;
- vi. Presentation of the final draft report/study to the 22nd SPREP Meeting to be held in Apia in September 2011

### **4. Consultant Expertise Required**

- i. Extensive experience and proven track record in Organisational/corporate/strategic/financial issues and consultative stakeholder engagement, preferably in the Pacific islands region.
- ii. Extensive experience and proven track record in consultative and participatory stakeholder engagement, preferably in the Pacific islands region.
- iii. Familiarity with the role and operations of regional Organisations in the Pacific, especially SPREP.
- iv. Comprehensive understanding of the main environmental and developmental issues in the Pacific islands region preferred.
- v. Proven ability to deliver required outputs within tight deadlines.

## 5. Timeframe

- |      |   |                  |
|------|---|------------------|
| i.   | Follow-up with Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs) on the questionnaire to ensure that effective feedback is received (5 days)           | June 2011        |
| ii.  | Travel to selected Member countries to consult on options for establishing a sub-regional presence for SPREP (15 days)                                | June/July 2011   |
| iii. | Work with Secretariat to provide a synthesis of key inputs and outcomes of consultations with SPREP Members, Territories and Partners/Donors (5 days) | June/July 2011   |
| iv.  | Work with Secretariat to finalise draft report/study (5 days)   | June/July 2011   |
| v.   | Final report/study printed, translated and distributed to SPREP Members   | July/August 2011 |
| vi.  | Presentation of final report/study to SPREP Meeting, Apia, Samoa  | September 2011   |

## 2) List of people and agencies consulted.

Country	Persons met	Title	Organisation	
Palau	Hon. Victor M. Yano	Minister	Minister of State	
	Mr Gustav Altaro	Director, Bureau of International Trade & Technical Assistance	Ministry of State	
	Mr Joe Itaro	Protected Areas Network Coordinator	Ministry of Natural Resources & Tourism	
	Ms Anu Gupta	Director of Conservation & Protected Areas	Palau Conservation Society	
	Mr Sebastian Marino	National Environment Planner	Office of Environmental Response & Coordination	
	Mr Tony Pollack	SPC Energy Specialist (Palau)	Ministry of Public Works	
	Mr Fernando Sengebau	Director	Bureau of Agriculture	
	Ms Tiare Holm	Principal Consultant	Sustainable Decisions	
	Ms Carol Emaurois	Information Officer	Palau International Coral Reef Center	
	Ms Roxane Blesam	Compliance Specialist	Environment Quality Protection Board	
	RMI	Mr Gee Leong Bing	Director, Office of Compact Implementation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
		Mr Anton Jimweryly	PNA Coordinator	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
		Ms Lydia Kaminaga	Deputy Director, Office of Multi-lateral Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mrs Yumiko Crisostomo		Director, Office of Environmental Planning & Policy Coordination	Office of the President	
Mr Warwick Harris		Deputy Director, Office of Environmental Planning & Policy Coordination	Office of the President	
Mr Nicholas Wardrop		National Energy Adviser	Ministry of Resources & Development	
Ms Arieta Gonelevu		SPC Energy Specialist (RMI)	Ministry of Resources & Development	
	Ms Deborah Manase	Director	Environment Protection Agency	

<b>Country</b>	<b>Persons met</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>FSM</b>	Mr Amena Yauvoli	Manager	SPC North Pacific Regional Office
	Ms Shanty Sigrah	Assistant Director, Pacific Affairs Division	Department of Foreign Affairs
	Ms Cindy Ehmes	Assistant Director, Division of Environment & Sustainable Development	Office of Environment & Emergency Management
	Mr Andrew Yatiman	Director, Division of Environment & Sustainable Development	Office of Environment & Emergency Management
	Mr Marion Henry	Secretary	Department of Resources and Development
	Mr Gibson Susumu	Agriculture Program Manager	Department of Resources and Development
	Mr Valentin Martin	Fisheries Unit Program Manager	Department of Resources and Development
	Professor Glenn Hurry	Executive Director	Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
	Mr William Kostka	Executive Director	Micronesia Conservation Trust
	Okeane Ehmes	Country Development Manager	UN Joint Presence Initiative
	High Chief Ihlen Joseph	Chief of Staff	State Government of Pohnpei
	Mr Robert Spegal	Head	Micronesia Human Resources Development Center
<b>PNG</b>	Mr Robert Yen	National Coordinator GEF	UNDP
	Dr Wari Lea Iamo	Secretary	Department of Environment and Conservation
	Mr Bobby Peinka	Executive Officer	Department of Environment and Conservation
	Mr John Wilmot	Environment Scientist	Department of Environment and Conservation Consultant
	Mr Lahui Ako	Director, Multilateral Economic Affairs Branch	Department of Foreign Affairs
	Professor Chalapan Kaluwin	Professor in Environmental Science and Geography	University of Papua New Guinea
	Professor Frank Griffin	Executive Dean, School of Natural & Physical Sciences	University of Papua New Guinea
	Dr Peter Petsul	Senior Lecturer, Chemistry Department	University of Papua New Guinea
	Mr Robin Totome	Lecturer, Biology Department	University of Papua New Guinea
	Ms Georgina Numbasa	Lecturer, Environmental Science & Geography Dept.	University of Papua New Guinea
	Mr Noel Mobiha	PNG Space Office	Department of Prime Minister and National Economic Commission
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Ms Mia Rimon	Manager	SPC Solomon Island National Office
	Mr Dan Sua'a	Director General	Forum Fisheries Agency
	Mr Chanel Iroi	Acting Permanent Secretary and Under Secretary (Technical)	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster management and Meteorology
	Mr Joe Horokou	Director, Environment and Conservation Division	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster management and Meteorology

Country	Persons met	Title	Organisation
	Mr George Hou'ou	Assistant Secretary for Regional Economic Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade
	Mr Mose Saitala	Director	Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility
	Ms Janice Spalding	Regional Program Coordinator	Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility
<b>Fiji</b>	Ms Judith Robinson	Acting High Commissioner	Australian High Commission
	Ms Romaine Kwesius	Counsellor, Development Cooperation Section	Australian High Commission
	Mr Ryan Medrana	First Secretary (Climate Change), Development Cooperation Section	Australian High Commission
	Ms Marina Illingworth	Program Manager, Environment and Climate Change, Development Cooperation Section	Australian High Commission
	Ms Andie Fong Toi	Deputy Secretary-General	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
	Dr Russell Howorth	Director, SPOAC Division	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	Ms Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamamanu	Deputy Director-General, Suva Regional Office	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	Mr John Yee Chief	Deputy Director, Corporate Services	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	Ms Patricia Sachs-Cornish	Senior Planning Adviser, Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	Ms Asenaca Vakacegu	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	UNICEF
	Mr Aminiasi Qareqare	Acting Principal Environmental Officer	Department of Environment
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Ms Isabelle Austin	Deputy Representative	UNICEF
	Mr Donald Wouloseje	Program Officer, UNDP	Vanuatu UN Joint Presence Office
	May Susan Pascual	Chief of UNICEF Field Office and UN Joint Presence	Vanuatu UN Joint Presence Office
	Ms Roslyn Arthur	UN Affairs Officer	Vanuatu UN Joint Presence Office
	Mr Albert Williams	Director	Department of Environment
	Mr Richard Balkonan	Senior Desk Officer, Asia and Pacific Division	Department of Foreign Affairs and External Trade
	Mr Salesa Koniahia	Acting Director, Vanuatu Meteorology Service	Department of Meteorology and Geo-hazards
	Mr David Gibson	Manager of Weather Forecasting and Services	Department of Meteorology and Geo-hazards
	Ms Lora L-Napuati	Media/Information Officer	Melanesian Spearhead Group Secretariat

### 3) Travel schedule

Country	Date (2011)
Palau	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> August - Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> August
RMI	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> August - Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> August
FSM	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> August - Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> August
Papua New Guinea	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> August - Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> August
Solomon Islands	Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> August - Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August
Fiji	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> August - Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August
Vanuatu	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August - Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> September

### 3) Generic Host Country Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding

The following is a draft of a generic Host Country Agreement (HCA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between a regional or international Organisation established in a Pacific island country.

#### HOST AGREEMENT

#### BETWEEN

**THE GOVERNMENT OF COUNTRY XXXX**

#### AND

**ORGANISATION XXXX**

#### TO ESTABLISH

**A NATIONAL COORDINATION OFFICE OF ORGANISATION XXXXX IN**

**THE CITY OF XXXXX, COUNTRY XXXX**

#### **The Government of Country XXXX and Organisation XXXX**

**wishing** to give effect to their mutual intent to establish a formal office of Organisation XXXX in Country XXXX;

**desiring** to define the legal capacity, privileges and immunities to be enjoyed by the officers of Organisation XXXX serving in its office; and

**wishing** to provide for the privileges and immunities of certain other persons in the interests of facilitating the functions of Organisation XXXX ;

**have agreed** as follows:

## **Article 1 Definitions**

In this Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires,

“appropriate authorities” means the national, provincial, or village authorities in accordance with the laws of Country XXXX;

“Director-General” means the Director-General of Organisation XXXX;

"expert" means a person engaged to perform short-term or temporary work on behalf of Organisation XXXX in the capacity of a temporary staff or a consultant but does not include staff members;

"Government" means the Government of Country XXXX;

"official activities" means all activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement, including Organisation XXXX's administrative activities;

"Organisation XXXX" means the Organisation XXXX

"staff member" means any person appointed to, or recruited for, a full-time or part-time position with Organisation XXXX and subject to its staff regulations, but does not include an expert or any person recruited locally on hourly rates of pay;

“Organisation XXXX office” means the Organisation XXXX office in Country XXXX.

## **Article 2 Legal personality**

Organisation XXXX has a legal personality. It has, in particular, the capacity to establish contracts, to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property, and to institute and be a party to legal proceedings.

## **Article 3 Immunities of ORGANISATION XXXX**

1. Except as otherwise provided for in this Agreement, the activities of Organisation XXXX in Country XXXX shall be governed by the laws of Country XXXX.
2. Organisation XXXX and its official activities, its property, premises and assets shall have immunity from any suit or other legal process except:
  - (a) to the extent that Organisation XXXX expressly waives its immunity from any suit or other legal process in a particular case;

- (b) in respect of any contract for the supply of goods or services, any lease for premises, any loan or other transaction for the provision of finance and any guarantee or indemnity in respect of any such transaction or of any other financial obligation;
- (c) in respect of a civil action by a third party for death, damage or personal injury arising from an accident caused by a motor vehicle belonging to, or operated on behalf of, Organisation XXXX;
- (d) in respect of a motor vehicle offence involving a motor vehicle belonging to, or operated on behalf of, Organisation XXXX;
- (e) in the event of the attachment, pursuant to the final order of a court of law, of the salaries, wages or other benefits owed by Organisation XXXX to a staff member or to an expert;
- (f) in respect of a counterclaim directly connected with proceedings initiated by Organisation XXXX;
- (g) in respect of the enforcement of an arbitration award made under Article 11.

3. Organisation XXXX's property, premises and assets shall have immunity from any form of restrictions or controls such as requisition, confiscation, expropriation or attachment. They shall also be immune from any form of administrative or judicial constraint; however, motor vehicles belonging to or operated on behalf of Organisation XXXX shall not be immune from administrative or judicial constraint when temporarily necessary in connection with the prevention of, and investigation into, accidents involving such motor vehicles. These immunities shall cease to apply in relation to property, premises and assets which have been abandoned by Organisation XXXX for a period in excess of twelve months.

#### **Article 4 Premises and property**

1. The premises of Organisation XXXX shall be inviolable and shall be under the full authority of Organisation XXXX. The appropriate authorities may enter the premises to carry out their duties only with the consent of the Organisation XXXX Director-General and under the conditions agreed to by him or her. The Director-General's consent shall be deemed to have been given in the case of fire or other event which may require immediate protective action.

2. The Government shall take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of Organisation XXXX against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any impairment of its dignity.

3. Organisation XXXX shall make known to the Government the location of any premises temporarily occupied for the performance of its official activities. Where any premises are used or occupied by Organisation XXXX for the performance of its official activities, such premises shall, with the concurrence of the Government, be accorded the status of premises of Organisation XXXX.



4. Organisation XXXX shall not permit its premises to become a refuge for any person not entitled to immunity.

5. The records of Organisation XXXX shall be inviolable wherever they are and by whomever they are possessed.

6. The Government shall provide reasonable and appropriate premises for the Organisation XXXX office in Honiara, free of charge. The Government shall assist Organisation XXXX in obtaining public utilities and other services, such as electricity, water, waste disposal, gas and telephone, at its permanent premises.

7. Pending the availability of permanent premises, the Government shall provide suitable interim premises to Organisation XXXX free of charge.

#### **Article 5 Communications**

1. Organisation XXXX may employ all appropriate means of communication, including messages in code or cipher. The Government shall not impose any restriction on the official communications of Organisation XXXX or on the import, export or circulation of its publications or other information materials.

2. Organisation XXXX may install and use a radio transmitter or satellite dish for communication if available communication facilities are inadequate and with notice to the Government, subject to the requirements of the telecommunication laws of Country XXXX.

3. The Government shall take all reasonable steps to assist the Organisation XXXX office to meet its specific technical and administrative communication needs.

#### **Article 6 Exemption from taxes and currency controls**

1. Within the scope of its official activities, Organisation XXXX, its property, premises and its income, including contributions made to Organisation XXXX under this Agreement, shall be exempt from all national taxes.

2. Goods, including Organisation XXX's publications, motor vehicles and items for official entertainment purposes that are intended for the official use of Organisation XXXX shall be exempt from all customs and excise duties including sales tax payable at customs, except payment for services. Goods which have been acquired or imported by Organisation XXXX to which exemptions apply shall not be given away, sold, lent, hired out or otherwise disposed of in Country XXXX except under conditions agreed on in advance with the Government.

3. The Government shall not impose any foreign exchange restrictions or taxes upon any financial transfers into and out of Country XXXX made by Organisation XXXX or its staff members, experts and representatives, other than those who are citizens of Country XXX.

**Article 7**  
**Staff members**

1. Staff members of Organisation XXXX:
  - (a) shall have, even after the termination of their service with Organisation XXXX immunity from any suit or other legal process in respect of acts and things done by them in the exercise of their official functions, including words written or spoken; this immunity shall not, however, apply in the case of a motor vehicle offence committed by such a staff member nor in the case of civil or administrative proceedings arising out of death, damage or personal injury caused by a motor vehicle belonging to or driven by him or her;
  - (b) shall be, unless they are citizens of Country XXXX, at the time of first taking up their post in Country XXX, exempt from customs duties and other such charges (except payments for services) in respect of import of furniture and personal effects including motor vehicles in their ownership or possession or already ordered by them and intended for their personal use or for their establishment; such goods shall be imported within six months of a staff member's first entry into Country XXX but in exceptional circumstances an extension of this period shall be granted by the Government; goods which have been acquired or imported by staff members and to which exemptions under this paragraph apply shall not be given away, sold, lent, hired out, or otherwise disposed of except under conditions agreed on in advance with the Government; furniture and personal effects including motor vehicles may be exported free of duties when leaving Country XXX on the termination of the official functions of the staff member;
  - (c) shall be exempt from all taxes on income received from Organisation XXXX.
  - (d) shall enjoy within and with respect to Country XXX the same protection and repatriation facilities with respect to themselves, their families and other members of their households, as are accorded to foreign nationals in time of international crises.

**Article 8**  
**Experts**

1. Experts shall enjoy, while exercising their official functions in Country XXX and while traveling in the exercise of their official functions in Country XXX, immunity, which shall extend beyond the termination of their functions with ORGANISATION XXXX, from any suit or other legal process in respect of acts and things done in the exercise of their official functions, including words written or spoken; this immunity shall not, however, apply in the case of a motor vehicle offence committed by such an expert nor in the case of civil or administrative proceedings arising out of death, damage or personal injury caused by a motor vehicle belonging to or driven by him or her.
2. The Government shall not require experts to pay taxes on income received from Organisation XXXX.

**Article 9**  
**Political neutrality**

1. The conduct of Organisation XXXX staff members and experts while traveling in, residing in, and exercising their official functions in Country XXX shall be governed by the provisions of the Organisation XXXX Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.
2. Staff members shall not engage in activities or make public statements, verbal, written or visual, that are of a partisan political nature in the context of Country XXXX.
3. Staff members shall not use privileges or immunities granted to them under this Agreement to further aspirations of a partisan political nature for themselves or their personal associates.
4. Clauses 1, 2 and 3 above do not restrict or prevent experts or staff members from pursuing personal and private political aspirations after the termination of their services with Organisation XXXX.
5. Any staff member who is a national of Country XXX and who wishes to pursue a political career/ aspirations whilst in the service of Organisation XXXX must first resign from Organisation XXXX .

**Article 10**  
**Immigration and labour laws**

1. Staff members, experts and representatives of ORGANISATION XXXX and their spouses and dependent children under the age of twenty-one years shall comply with the immigration laws of Country XXXX.
2. The Government shall provide suitable entry permits and work permits requested by Organisation XXXX for staff members, their spouses and children under the age of 21 years and for experts, on the same basis as such permits are provided to staff members and their families, consultants and contractors of foreign embassies located in Country XXXX.

**Article 11**  
**Object of privileges and immunities accorded to staff members and experts**

1. Privileges and immunities are accorded to staff members and experts to ensure the independence of the persons to whom they are accorded in the exercise of their functions to achieve the purposes of the regional service of Organisation XXXX .
2. The Director-General has the right and duty after consultations with the members of Organisation XXXX to waive any immunities, other than his or her own, and those of his or her spouse and dependent children under the age of 18 years, when he or she considers that such immunities would impede the course of justice and they can be waived without prejudicing the purposes for which they were accorded.
3. If such immunities are not waived, Organisation XXXX shall make the strongest efforts to achieve an equitable solution to the matter. Such a solution may include an arbitration procedure.

**Article 12**  
**Notification of appointment**

1. Organisation XXXX shall inform the Government when a staff member or expert takes up or relinquishes his or her post. Where possible, prior notice of arrival and final departure shall be given. If staff members are accompanied by a spouse or dependent children under the age of 18 years, prior notice shall also be given, where possible, in respect of such persons.
2. Organisation XXXX shall twice each year send to the Government a list of all staff members and their citizenship and their spouses and dependent children under the age of 18 years accompanying them in Country XXX, and experts.
3. The immunities and privileges given in this Agreement shall only apply to persons who are in the list given to the Government under clause 2 above.

**Article 13**  
**Cooperation**

1. Organisation XXXX shall cooperate fully at all times with the appropriate authorities in order to prevent any abuse of the privileges, immunities and facilities provided for in this Agreement.
2. The Government reserves its sovereign right to take reasonable measures to preserve security.
3. Nothing in this Agreement prevents the application of laws necessary for health and quarantine or, in respect of Organisation XXXX and its officers, laws relating to public order.

**Article 14**  
**Consultation**

The Government and Organisation XXXX shall consult at the written request of either of them concerning matters arising under this Agreement.

**Article 15**  
**Amendment**

This Agreement may be amended by agreement between the Government and Organisation XXXX, confirmed by an exchange of notes between the Government and Organisation XXXX.

**Article 16**  
**Applicable laws and settlement of disputes**

1. The applicable laws shall be the laws of Country XXX.

2. Any dispute between the Government and Organisation XXXX concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement or any question affecting the relations between the Government and Organisation XXXX shall be settled by consultation or negotiation or by some other mutually acceptable method between the Government and Organisation XXXX.

**Article 17**  
**Entry into force, amendment and termination**

1. This Agreement shall enter into force on the date that the Government and ORGANISATION XXXX have both signed two originals. One original shall be deposited with the Government and one original shall be deposited with Organisation XXXXX.

2. This Agreement may be terminated by either the Government or Organisation XXXXX with a reasonable period of notice.

3. If the Organisation XXX office is removed from Country XXXXX, this Agreement shall, after a period reasonably required for the transfer and disposal of the property of ORGANISATION XXXX in Country XXXX, cease to be in force.

4. In either event, the date on which this Agreement terminates shall be confirmed by an exchange of notes between the Government and Organisation XXXX.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** the undersigned, being duly authorised thereunto, have signed this Agreement.

DONE in duplicate at \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (Year).

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF HOST COUNTRY XXXXXX**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name: XXXXXX**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Organisation XXXXXXXXXXXXX**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name: XXXXXXXXXXX**  
**Director-General**